BULLET

Shoot-Em-Up Puzzle Action 弾丸

RULEBOOK

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Shoot-Em-Up Puzzle Action 弾丸

Overview

In this tense, fast-paced puzzle game, 1-4 players take on the role of heroines who settle their disputes with each other through excessive firepower! Use your actions to form patterns, clear your sight, and assault the opponent! Keep up dealing with the curtain of bullets coming at you each round and be the last heroine standing to win!

Designer's Forward

For those new to Bullet, welcome! For those returning from ♥, welcome back!

With the success of Bullet, I've been able to introduce the world to even more heroines, including ones from ACTUAL shoot-em-up properties (go check out Bullet🍊). What started as a wish has blossomed into a full-fledged product line, complete with many long nights of arguing with our lead tester, Marco.

Mechanically, Bullet let me spread my designer wings a bit, now that we know the system works. You might notice many of the mechanics in this set are pretty wild, but should still be accessible. The bosses tend to be even harder than before, so don't take them lightly!

Flavorfully, Bullet expands on the universe of Cycle 617 introduced in ♥. Many heroines from far-flung galaxies have their own bones to pick with each other, so there's aliens now. ★ takes place a short time after ♥, so not too much has happened since then. Esfir absorbed Ekolu and became a Space Witch, Adelheid defeated a giant space shark, Mary became a superhero, Rie met her match, and Young-Ja is still terrorizing unsuspecting tresspasers. Ling-Ling and Senka? You'll have to wait for Space Chase to see what happened to them...

In the designer's forward for ♥, I waxed poetic about the meaning of fun. I realize now that was a little much, so just have fun. Try and do that with this game though if it's not too much trouble.

-Joshua Van Laningham (Ithry)
Bullet★ Lead Designer

Presented by Level 99 Games

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Supporting Illustrators: Ian Olympia

...and YOU! Thanks for Playing!

Skip the rules and watch a How-To-Play video!

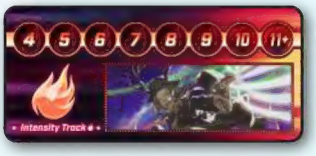
Message us at **https://www.level99games.com/contact-us** for inquiries involving missing or damaged parts.

8 Heroine Boards / 4 Sight Boards / 8 Action Boards
(Boss Forms on backs of Heroine and Action Boards.)

90 Pattern cards

4 Reference cards

51 Boss Pattern cards



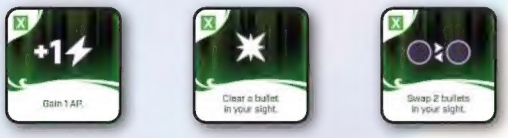
1 Intensity Track

4 AP Markers, 1 Intensity Marker

5 Shield Markers

1
Choose a face-up bullet in your sight. Place it into a teammate's sight.
2
Your teammate moves a bullet orthogonally 1 space.
2
Your teammate draws a pattern.

12 Team Action Tiles (4 sets of 3)

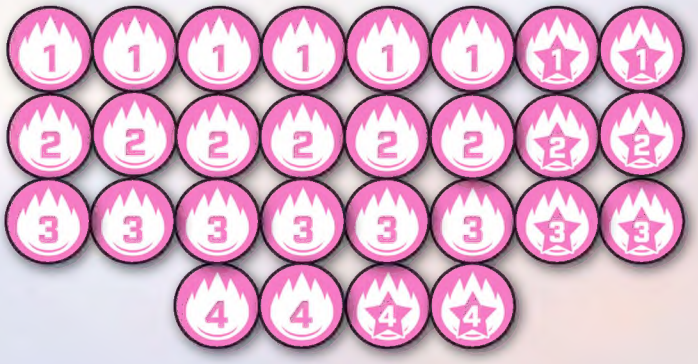


27 Powerup Tiles (3 of each)

1 Immobilizer, Coat, and Badge bullets (punch and wooden)
(Wooden versions of these bullets are only useable with deluxe wooden bullets.)

4 Current bags

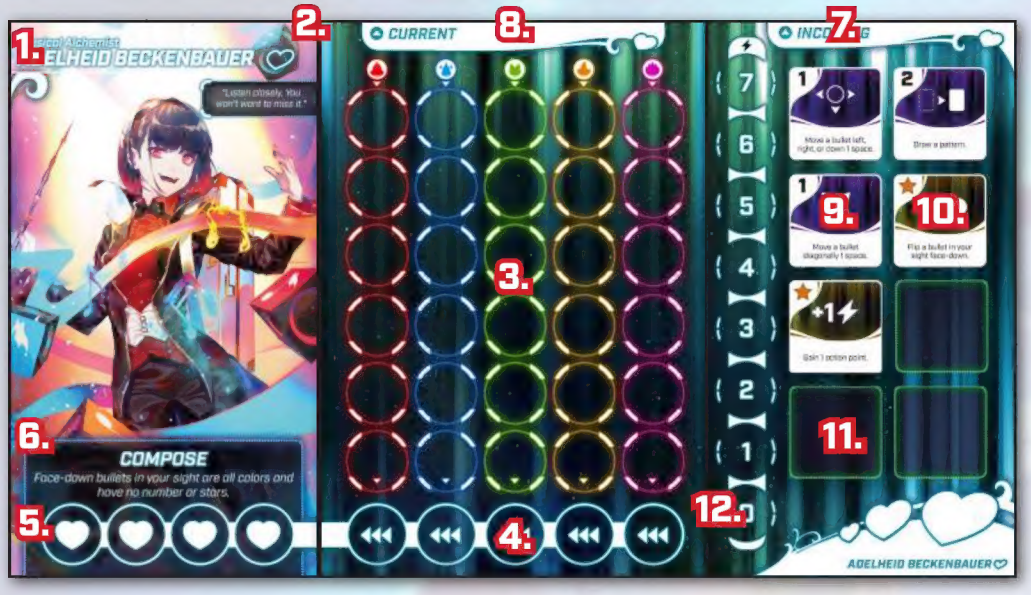
1 Center bag



140 Bullets

Heroines

Each girl is the heroine of their own story, each with something to prove. Choose a heroine and use their unique ability and actions to prove you have what it takes to win! Each heroine has their own unique player board that changes how they play the game. Each heroine consists of a heroine board and their action board, along with a sight in the center.



Heroines have the following attributes:

1. **Heroine Info**: Subtitle and name of the heroine, along with a quote from the heroine.
2. **Difficulty**: How easy the heroine is to learn to play (not master). Heroines with the heart icon are easy, and heroines with the star icon are hard.
3. **Sight**: The grid where bullets are placed.
4. **Hitbox**: The area below sight that shows when you are hit. Bullets that move out of your sight go here, then go to your life immediately.
5. **Life**: The amount of life you currently have. When you take damage, these will be covered with bullets.
6. **Unique Ability (UA)**: Each heroine has a unique ability that affects how they play the game. Some abilities can give you extra cards or markers to use, while others could affect sections of your board.
7. **Incoming Area**: Stores bullets sent to you by another heroine. These will be placed in your current next round.
8. **Current Area**: Holds your current bag which contains the bullets you must draw on the current round.
9. **Actions** The different actions your heroine can perform on their round by spending the Action Points (AP) listed on the top-left.
10. **Star Actions**: Actions with a star instead of an AP cost. These effects occur when stars are cleared.
11. **Powerup Slots**: These are used to place powerups in when gained.
12. **Action Point Track**: Tracks your current AP. You may never have more AP than your maximum.

Bullets

Bullets represent a heroine's will in physical form. What better way to get your point across than to literally drive it home!

Each bullet has the following attributes:

1. **Color**: Indicates which column of your sight it is placed in when drawn.
2. **Number**: Indicates how many spaces down in a column it is placed when drawn from current. On effect text, a number is indicated with quotes (ex. "Clear a "3" bullet.")
3. **Star**: Some bullets have stars, which allow you to perform additional effects when cleared.

Patterns

Patterns represent the complex web a Heroine's will can create. Build up your willpower and unleash powerful attacks to overwhelm your opponent! Patterns allow heroines to clear bullets and send them to other heroines.

A Pattern is comprised of the following:

1. **Name**: The name of the pattern.
2. **Pattern Grid**: The requirements needed to use the pattern and which bullets are removed when the pattern is used.
3. **Quote**: A quote about the pattern by the owner.

Powerups

Powerups give heroines a temporary boost. Each powerup has an effect. All powerups are a one-time use and are discarded when used.

Intensity

In a heated firefight, bullets are always coming at you from all angles!
The Intensity Track denotes how many bullets each Heroine will draw at the end of their round in addition to the ones in their Incoming.

Center and Current Bags

The center is a bag that holds the general supply of bullets. This is also where intensity is drawn from at the end of each round.
Each heroine's current bag holds the bullets they must survive each round. This is where bullets from intensity and incoming go at the end of each round.

Setup

1. Each player chooses a heroine and their corresponding action board and places a sight between them to form their board.
2. Take an AP Marker and place it on the highest space of your AP Track.
3. Take all patterns associated with your Heroine and shuffle them to form a face-down deck, then draw patterns equal to your hand size (3 by default) and put them face-up in front of you, below your board. These face-up patterns in front of you form your hand.
4. Perform any additional setup your Heroine may have as part of their Unique Ability.
5. Put all bullets into the center and shuffle it, then draw 10 bullets from the center into each heroine's current. Place each heroine's current in the current area above their sight.
6. Place the Intensity Marker on the leftmost space of the Intensity Track.
7. Shuffle the Powerup deck and place it in the middle of the table face-down. Draw powerups from the deck equal to the number of heroines and place them face-up below the deck, where everyone can reach them.
8. Set a timer for 3 minutes. If this is your first game, or you want a more relaxed experience, we recommend not using the timer. You can find music timers themed for each heroine at www.level99games.com/bullet

Once all of these steps are complete, start the timer and begin the game!

A setup with one heroine shown.

Interacting With the Center or Current
Whenever anything tells you to interact with the center or current, always make sure to shuffle it before and after you interact with it!

Gameplay

Turns are simultaneous, with each heroine performing the Option Phase then End Phase at their own pace. **A heroine cannot enter the End Phase until their current bag is empty.** Once all Heroines have performed both of these phases, a Cleanup Phase occurs, then a new round begins.

Send as many bullets as possible each round to damage your opponents and survive their attacks. Be the last heroine standing to win!

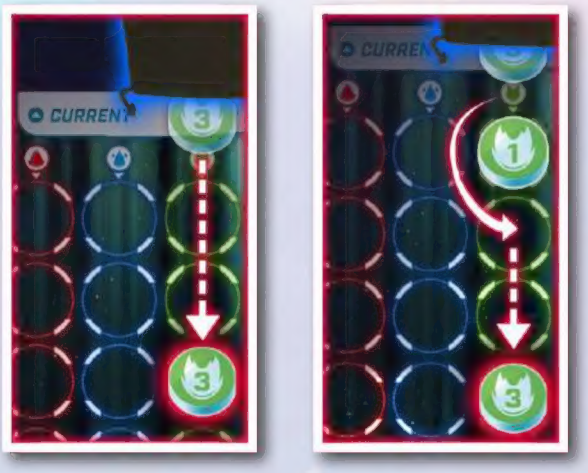
Option Phase

During this Phase you will place bullets into your sight, use actions to manipulate these bullets, and use your patterns to get rid of them and send them to your opponents!

You may use the options **Place Bullets**, **Use Actions**, **Use Patterns**, or **Use Powerups** in any order as many times as you are able.

Place Bullets

To place a bullet, take a bullet from your current without looking, and flip it face-up, then find the column that matches its color and place it a number of spaces down in that column equal to the number on the bullet. Skip over and don't count any spaces that already contain bullets.



(Left) A Green 3 bullet is drawn, then placed 3 spaces down in the green column. (Right) The same bullet skips over the space with another bullet, coming to place in the 3rd open space.

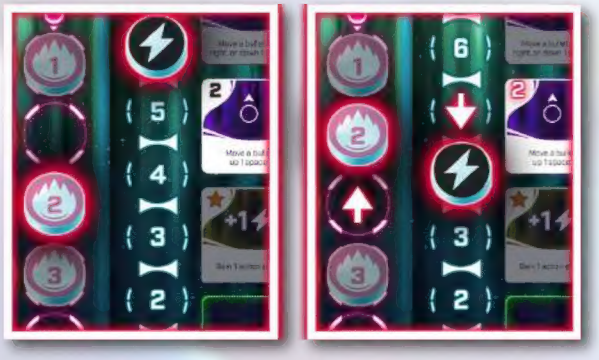
If a bullet would be placed in your hitbox, that bullet hits you immediately. Place the bullet that hit you onto your leftmost empty life to indicate that you lost a life. If you would lose your last life, then proceed to the "Game End" section.

It's important to keep in mind when choosing to place bullets that the highest numbered bullet is a "4", so most Heroines are only at risk of being hit when they have at least 3 bullets in any column.

(Left) A green "4" bullet is drawn. Its placement puts it out of the heroine's sight. (Above) The bullet is placed into the leftmost open life slot, hitting the heroine.

Use Actions

To use an action, spend the AP on your tracker then perform the effect listed on the Actions section of your board. You cannot use an action if you don't have enough AP to pay for it.



(Left) Esfir spends 2 AP... (Right) ...to move her pink "2" bullet up one space.

Moving Bullets

Many actions allow you to move bullets. Movement can never wrap around the board. You cannot move a bullet into a space containing another bullet, but **you can chain the same movement action to move past a space containing another bullet.** You cannot move a bullet into your hitbox and hit yourself, nor can they be moved off the top or sides of the board. You can attempt to move off the board and fail for a movement if you'd like.
Note that placing a bullet is not a movement effect.

Move vs Place vs Put

Move: Moving a bullet in your sight.
Place: Placing a bullet into your sight following the Place Bullets option rules.
Put: Putting something from one area into another.

On Effects

Effects only affect you unless otherwise stated. For example, an effect that said "Place a bullet from the center." would place the bullet in your sight. An effect that said "Move a bullet down one space." would only affect bullets in your sight.

Effects also only last until the end of your round, unless otherwise stated. If an effect stated "Gain an AP the next time you use a pattern." you wouldn't gain an AP if the next pattern you used was on a future round.

If you can't complete part of an effect, the entire effect fails. For example, if an effect said "Discard a pattern to draw a pattern." and you did not have a pattern to discard, then you could not draw a pattern. If another effect said "Move a bullet 4 spaces up." and it was in the second row, it wouldn't move.

Use Patterns

To use a pattern in your hand, the requirements on the pattern's grid must exactly match an arrangement in your sight, no mirroring or rotating allowed. If it matches, clear all bullets on ✖ (clear) spaces in the pattern by placing them face-down into the incoming area of the heroine to your left. **✖s aren't requirements, so you do not have to have any bullets in the ✖ spaces on a pattern.✖spaces also do not have to be present in your sight to use a pattern.** Once a pattern has been used, it is discarded.

For this pattern, the requirements on the left match the pattern, and would clear the "2" and "3" green bullets in the clear spaces indicated on the pattern. As there is no bullet in the bottom-most space, nothing would be cleared here. The arrangement on the right does not meet requirements, and the pattern cannot be used.

Star Bullets

Whenever you clear bullets (through any means and from any area) and you clear a bullet with a star, perform additional effects shown on every action with a star in the corner for each bullet with a star cleared. Most heroines have an action that gives them 1 AP when a star is cleared, but some may have additional star effects. **If a heroine has multiple star effects, they all trigger each time a star is cleared in any order.**

Pattern Arangement Requirements

Pattern grids can consist of a variety of different requirements. Unless otherwise stated, everything on a pattern is a requirement besides clears ✖.
Here is a list of the different requirements:

Bullets: Bullets are the most common things arranged to make a Pattern:

(Left) A pattern with any bullet as requirements. (Middle) A pattern with the two edges needing the same numbered bullet. (Right) A pattern with a colored bullet and any bullet as requirements

Empty Space: A dotted-line circle indicates that this space must have nothing in it. This includes bullets, markers, or any other component. Spaces with this and another icon must only have that requirement in that space and nothing else.

A pattern with a numbered bullet and empty spaces as requirements.

Other Requirements: Other things, such as Heroine unique components, may also be requirements.

A pattern needing a crosshair on the left, a component unique to Senka.

Note that spaces with nothing in them are just used to indicate distance for other requirements. These blank spaces do not have any inherent requirement. For the Caine M30 pattern shown previously, the two spaces between the crosshair and the clears show that the crosshair and clears must be exactly two spaces apart horizontally. The spaces in between can have anything in them and the pattern is still useable.

You can use your reference card to keep track of different basic requirements during gameplay.

Additional Components

Some heroines have additional components. See a heroine's UA for more information on how any additional component works.

Use Powerups

At the end of each round, you'll gain a powerup you can use on future rounds. To use a powerup, simply use the effect on the powerup then discard it to the powerup discard.

End Phase

If the timer runs out and a Heroine hasn't finished the Option Phase, the only option they are allowed to take is "Place Bullets". After they have placed all bullets in their current, they proceed to the End Phase. During this phase, perform the following steps:

1. Take a face-up powerup from the middle of the table, then place it in an empty slot on your action board. If you are out of blank slots, you may discard one on your board to gain the new one, or discard the powerup you would have gained.
2. Draw new patterns up to your hand size (3 by default). If you would ever need to draw a pattern and have none in your deck, shuffle your discard pile to make a new deck and continue drawing. If you have more than your hand size, discard down to your hand size.
3. Draw bullets from the center (without looking at them) equal to the number on the intensity track that the Marker is on and put them into your current to be drawn next round.

An Empty Center

If the center ever runs out of bullets, all heroines are too exhausted to continue and the game ends in a tie. Try catching your breath and starting a new game!

Cleanup Phase

Once all Heroines have finished their End Phases:

1. Draw new powerups to the middle of the table until there are powerups equal to the number of heroines. If you run out of powerups, shuffle the powerup discard to form a new deck.
2. Increase the intensity by 1, plus 1 for each heroine that lost this turn
3. Take all bullets in your Incoming and put them in your current.
4. Set your AP to its highest number. After this, start another 3 minute timer (if using a timer) and a new round begins.

Game End

When there is one heroine left in the game, that heroine wins if they can finish their round without losing.

When you would lose your last life, keep all remaining bullets in your sight, life, current, and incoming until other heroines finish the End Phase.

Then, if there are still heroines with life left, you (and others with no life) have now lost. Place all bullets on your boards and in your current into the center. Then, return all bullets in the Incoming of the heroine to your left to the center, placing all bullets in your Incoming into the incoming of the heroine to your left. On future rounds, the heroine to your right will now place cleared bullets to the new heroine on their left.

If all End Phases end and all remaining heroines would lose, the heroine with the least bullets in their current wins. If this number is a tie, proceed to Sudden Death.

Sudden Death

All tied Heroines do the following:

1. Place their incoming into their current.
2. Both heroines take the "Place Bullets" option simultaneously. They may do no other options, like using actions or powerups. UAs also stop working. If a heroine runs out of bullets in their current, they place a bullet from the center instead.

The first heroine that gets hit loses! If all heroines would get hit at the same time, the game is a tie!

Additional Modes

Bullet can be played in various other ways, with each mode providing a different experience:

Free-For-All (2-4p): The mode you just learned! For a calmer experience, you can remove the timer.

Teams (4p): Form a team of two and combine your powers to fight against another team!

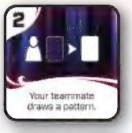
Score Attack (1p): See how many rounds you can last on your own! Recommended for learning new heroines.

Boss Battle (1-4p): Join forces with up to 3 other Heroines and take on the powerful boss version of another heroine!

Teams

Team mode plays like Free-For-All, with a few differences:

1. Players form teams of two, sitting next to each other and across from another team.
2. No timer is used in this mode.
3. Powerups are not used in this mode.
4. During Setup, each player takes a set of 3 Team Actions and places them in their powerup slots. These have AP costs and can be used by either heroine at any time during the Option Phase. Team Actions are permanent and are not discarded when used.



Have your teammate draw a pattern from the top of their deck.

You can send bullets in your sight to your teammate using normal placement rules.

Have your teammate move a bullet in any direction.

5. A team has shared health. A team loses when both heroines have lost all their health (a single heroine doesn't lose if their lives are all gone). When you would be hit, the damage can go to either heroine's life.
6. When you clear bullets, they are passed to the heroine directly across from you instead of the heroine to your left.

Score Attack

Score Attack plays like Free-For-All, with a few differences:

1. No timer is used in this mode.
2. Powerups are not used in this mode.
3. Bullets cleared go to intensity.
4. The intensity for the round is increased by 1 for each bullet on the intensity track. *(the intensity marker does not increase by this amount).*
5. After drawing bullets for intensity, put the bullets on the intensity track back into the center.
6. When you lose, your score is equal to the number of rounds you survived!

Intensity is currently 8. With 4 bullets cleared, this brings intensity to 12 this round.

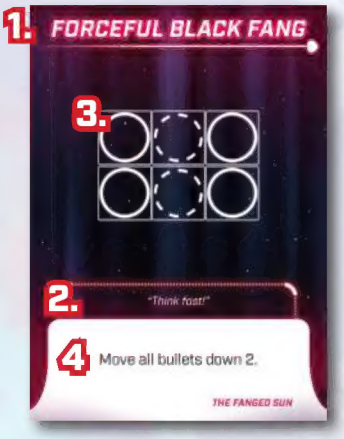
Boss Battle

Bosses are formed by flipping over a heroine board and their action board to form their Boss. Bosses have the following attributes:

1. **Boss Info**: Subtitle and name of the boss, along with a quote from the boss.
2. **Unique Ability**: Each boss has a unique ability that affects how they play or affects heroines directly. Read the Unique Ability section of the board for more information on how each boss' unique ability works.
3. **Shield Slots**: These are covered by shields. They increase Intensity and perform effects when revealed.
4. **Shields**: Destroy all shields to defeat the boss and win! Shields also cover Shield Slots on a boss' board.
5. **Pattern Areas**: Most bosses have a deck of patterns, at least one of which will be active every round.
6. **Incoming Area**: Where bullets cleared by heroines are sent.
7. **Shield Break Point**: Number of bullets needed to break a shield based on the number of remaining heroines at the start of the heroine round.

Boss Patterns

Boss Patterns can trigger an effect at the end of the heroines' round. Boss patterns have the following attributes:



1. **Name:** The name of the Pattern.
2. **Quote:** A quote about the pattern, usually by the owner.
3. **Pattern:** The requirements heroines must have in their sight to not suffer the effect on the card.
4. **Effect:** An effect heroines must follow at the end of their next round if their sight does not contain the pattern on the card.

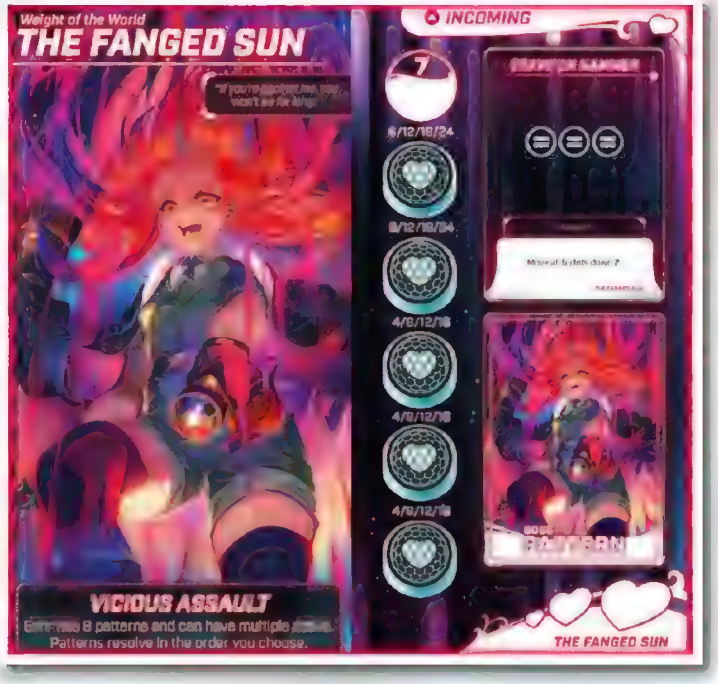
Setup

No timer is used in this mode. Powerups are not used in this mode.

1. Each player chooses a heroine board.
2. Take an AP Marker and place it on the highest space of your AP Track.
3. Take all patterns associated with your Heroine and shuffle them, then draw three and put them face-up in front of you, under your board.
4. Perform any additional setup your Heroine may have as part of their Unique Ability.
5. Put all bullets into the center and shuffle it, then draw 10 bullets from the center into each heroine's current. Place each Heroine's current in the current space above their board.
6. Each player takes a set of 3 Team Actions and places them in their powerup slots. These have AP costs and can be used by heroines at any time during the Option Phase. These actions are permanent and are not discarded when used. Team Actions are not used solo.
7. Once heroines are set up, setup the boss. Choose the Boss side of any

heroine not being used and place it in the middle of the table.

8. Shuffle that Boss' Patterns and put the deck face-down in their Pattern deck area. Reveal the top pattern of the deck and place it in the active pattern area.
9. Place Shields on every Shield Slot on the boss besides their topmost slot.
10. Perform any additional setup the boss' UA might have.



A Boss board after being setup.

Gameplay

Heroine and boss rounds are separate, with the heroines taking a round first simultaneously, then the boss taking theirs until either all Heroines have lost their lives or the boss has lost all their shields.

Heroine Round

Heroines then take their round as in Free-For-All, performing their Option, End, and Cleanup Phases.

During the End Phase, do not perform Step 3 (drawing from intensity). During the Cleanup Phase, do not perform Step 2 (increasing intensity).

When a Pattern or any effect clears bullets, put them in the boss' Incoming face-up. Heroines will check damage dealt at the end of the round to see if they remove any shields.

Boss Round

When all heroines have completed their End and Cleanup Phases, the Boss round begins. They will activate their pattern, check if a shield is broken, heroines will draw intensity, then the boss will reveal a new active pattern.

1. The boss performs the effect on their active pattern card to each heroine who did not complete the pattern in their sight (no rotating or mirroring). If the boss has multiple patterns active, their effects resolve in any order the player chooses.

2. Total the amount of bullets heroines sent to the boss. The amount needed to break a boss' Shield depends on the number of remaining heroines (at the start of the last heroine round). This break point is indicated above each shield slot, with the leftmost number being for one heroine remaining, then going up per additional heroine in the game. Heroines must always clear the boss' topmost shield.

If the total meets the amount needed, then a shield is broken! Remove that shield from the boss. If any remaining bullets would meet the amount needed for another shield, continue breaking topmost shields until the bullets left cannot break a shield.

If any shields were broken, put all bullets in the boss' Incoming to the center. If there are not enough bullets to break a shield, the bullets remain in the boss' incoming and carry over to the next heroine round.

Then, perform all effects on newly-broken shield slots in the order they were revealed.

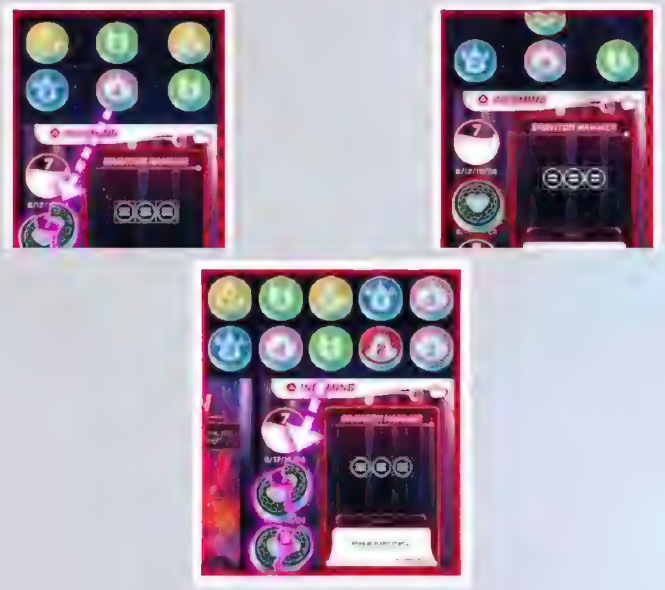
On Boss Effects

When a boss effect mentions "you" they are referring to you the heroine. When a Boss refers to themselves, they will use their heroine's first name. Whenever a boss effect would affect a heroine, it is considered the boss doing the effect, not the heroine.

If a boss' effect (on their patterns, UA, shield slots, or anywhere else), would conflict with another game rule or another heroine's effect, the boss' effect takes precedence.

On Boss Difficulty

As the capabilities of heroines vary, a boss may be easier or harder to beat as one heroine than another. Therefore, bosses do not have difficulties like heroines. We hope they all present a fun challenge for each heroine to solve!



*These examples assume a solo game. **(Top Left)** 6 bullets were sent, which is enough to break a shield. **(Top right)** Only 4 bullets were sent, which doesn't break a shield. They remain in the Boss' incoming. **(Bottom)** 10 bullets were sent, which is two short of breaking two shields.*

3. Each heroine puts a number of bullets from the center to their current equal to the Intensity number listed on the bottommost revealed Shield Slot.

4. Finally, they draw a card from their pattern deck and put it face-up in their active pattern area, covering and deactivating the active one from last round. If they cannot draw a pattern, they shuffle their patterns to form a new deck first.

Play continues with the heroines taking their turns then the boss taking a turn until the game ends.

Game End

Losing

If a heroine ever has no life, they lose immediately. When a heroine loses, they put all bullets in their sight, board, life and current back into the center. They also remove their boards from the game. From the next round on, the amount needed to break a shield is designated by the number of remaining heroines. If all heroines have lost, then the boss wins!

Winning

If the boss ever has no shields, the heroines win at the end of the round (after heroine loss is checked)!

5-8 Players

If you have another Bullet base game, like Bullet♥, you can play Free For All and Team Mode with up to 8 players! Just take both sets of bullets from both games and put them into the current at the start of the game (280 total combined).

Note: Due to the increased number of certain types of bullets, like "4" bullets, playing with 5-8 players can be much more chaotic than a game with 4 or fewer players!

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What happens if I would get past the end of the Intensity Track?

A: In the unlikely event that happens, you keep going! The Intensity Track is meant to go on forever.

Q: Can Balance be hit in Sudden Death?

A: Yes. When entering Sudden Death Balance's unique ability stops working like other heroines and she can be hit, even though she has no life to hit.

Q: What happens if Balance loses in Team Mode?

A: The team with Balance loses.

Q: Against Collective Consciousness, can Rose rotate the YNN patterns in her hand?

A: Yes.

Q: Can Rose rotate other Boss patterns before they resolve?

A: No.

Q: Against Knife & Fork, can one cleared bullet fulfill multiple pattern requirements?

A: No.

Q: If I'm playing Jane and the timer runs out, do I still resolve my UA for my Immobolizer, Badge, and Coat bullets?

A: No. They are placed into your incoming with no effect.

Q: If I'm playing Planil and the timer runs out, what happens to the bullets in my Mind?

A: Place all the bullets in your Mind, then Current.

Q: Can Nawa's movement effects on her patterns be chained?

A: No.

Q: For Jane vs Celestial Cleaning Ltd., where do my Immobilizer, Badge, and Coat bullets end up?

A: They will end up in the center with the rest of the bullets. Good luck finding them!

Q: For Jane vs Celestial Cleaning Ltd., what happens if another player draws one of Jane's bullets?

A: Jane resolves them, then they are put in her incoming as per her UA.

Q: Do bullets in Planil's Mind count towards the number of bullets in current at end of game tie?

A: No.

Q: How does Vesta's UA work in Score Attack?

A: She performs her UA as normal, except the bullets she would put into incoming go to intensity instead.

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Happy gaming.